

CHARGE AND SCOPE OF WORK FOR THE 2011/2012

RIVERSIDE CITY CHARTER REVIEW COMMITTEE

The current Charter of the City of Riverside was ratified by the qualified electors of the City at an election held on November 7, 2006 and filed in the Office of the Secretary of State on January 5, 2007. The last formal charter review process concluded with a special election on November 2, 2004 where the voters approved numerous substantive changes to the Charter.

What is a Charter? A city charter is a unique document that, in many ways, acts like a constitution for the city adopting it. It can only be adopted, amended or repealed by a majority vote of a city's voters. One advantage of a charter is that it allows a city to tailor its organization and elective offices, taking into account the unique local conditions and needs of the community.

Another advantage to a charter is that it transfers the power to adopt legislation affecting municipal affairs from the state legislature to the city adopting it. A city operating under a charter can acquire full control over its municipal affairs. These affairs are unaffected by the general laws passed by the state legislature on the same subject matters. This, in effect, gives the local voters more control over their local government and the affairs of the city. However, a city operating under a charter is still subject to the general laws as passed by the state legislature, on affairs that are not municipal in nature, and are of statewide concern.

Section 1403 of the Riverside City Charter authorizes the City Council to appoint a Charter Review Committee. The Charter Review Committee shall have the power and duty to:

- (a) Recommend to the City Council, which, if any, charter amendments should be placed on the ballot at the next regular municipal election for Mayor.
- (b) Hold public meetings to receive input on proposed charter amendments.
- (c) Present a final report of its recommendations to the City Council. The committee may, in its discretion, make interim reports to the City Council.

Section 1404 of the Riverside City Charter provides that the Charter may be amended in accordance with the Constitution and the laws of the State of California.

Consequently, the "charge" of the Charter Review Committee is to consider whether the Charter meets the needs of the City of Riverside today and whether it will meet the needs of the City into the future, whether the Charter should be revised to address those needs, and generally, to recommend a Charter which has the potential to endure for many years to come.

In order that the City Council may stay abreast of the Committee's work, interim reports should be presented at a regularly scheduled City Council meeting. All Charter amendments recommended by the Committee to the City Council must be made by a two-thirds vote of the total membership of the Charter Review Committee.